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MontCAS Montana Comprehensive Assessment System February 2006 Newsletter

Spring 2006 MontCAS Testing Windows

Feb. 13 - March 29	Phase 2, CRT-Alternate	Grades 3-8 and 10 Reading and Math
March 6 - March 29	Phase 2, CRT	Grades 3-8 and 10 Reading and Math
March 22 - April 12	Phase 1, NRT and NRT Alternate Assessment Scales	Grades 4, 8, 11 Language Arts, Reading, Math, Social Studies, and Science
The required National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) tests in Reading and Math in grades 4 and 8 are administered in odd-numbered years. The next administration of the required NAEP reading and math in grades 4 and 8 will be in 2007.		



There's More to Assessment Than Testing

Registration is now open for the Office of Public Instruction May 1 and 2 statewide assessment conference. More information about the conference can be found at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/assessconf/>.

The conference is intended to provide a broad base of assessment and data information for test coordinators, curriculum directors, staff responsible for student information systems and information related to student achievement, and department/grade-level chairs.

Two keynote speakers will highlight the conference. Dr. Stanley Rabinowitz is a nationally-recognized expert on student assessment and a member of the Montana Technical Advisory Committee which provides expertise on technical testing issues. Dr. Ellen Forte is also nationally recognized for her research and expertise on assessment and accountability issues. More information on the keynote speakers is linked to the assessment website.

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/assessconf/keynote.html>.

Conference sessions include panels on Assessment 101, reporting tools, online testing, test development, data warehouses, classroom assessment tools, and special populations. Individual sessions include research on classroom assessment, formative assessment, electronic data control issues, MontCAS updates, revisited science standards, accommodations, and alternate assessment.

Coach's Corner

Did you ever wish there were a good way to share information with other test coordinators, get answers to your questions, and pass along hints that you have discovered?

There is! Using the MetNet Message Board, you can view or join in with conversations or create one of your own for others to respond.

- Go to the MetNet webpage at <http://www.metnet.mt.gov>, and choose *Login* from the *Take me to...* dropdown list at the top.
- Type in your user Id of "opi" and the password "assess". Do not type the quotes.
- Click on the Message Board icon.



The Message Board contains a folder for each of the test types. Double click any folder to see a list of the question and answer threads that already exist for that test type. Double click on any message to read a the message or create one of your own by choosing *New Message* from the *Create...* dropdown in the upper right corner. If you would like to respond to an existing message, open it and choose *Reply* from the *Create...* dropdown list. You can reply to an individual or the entire group. Add recipients by clicking on the Add button and choosing names from the list of current members.

To exit the message board, click on Logout in the upper right hand corner of the screen.

In order for a message board to work effectively, members must be committed to logging in regularly. Take the time to share your knowledge and maybe learn something new in the process. Happy sharing. 😊

Standard Administration = Reliable and Accurate Data

The MontCAS statewide assessments are standardized tests which means administration must be standardized. To facilitate standard administration, the Office of Public Instruction has published *OPI Guidelines and Procedures for Test Security*

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/OPIGuideProcTS.pdf>

The *OPI Guidelines* state that “No student taking the test should have access to any form of assistance or material that could provide an unfair advantage.” Specific examples of **Do’s and Do Not’s** are included in the *Guidelines*. OPI has received related questions. Below are those questions and answers.



Question

If charts for math or reading have been displayed in the classroom for the entire year, do they need to be removed from the walls or covered during testing? According to the procedures it sounds like they do. If they do, does this apply to I.T.B.S. tests as well?

Answer

Yes, you are correct. See the following explanation.

1. The charts could provide an unfair advantage for your students, an advantage students in other schools may not have. In other schools, there may be charts that your students do not have access to. Those should also be removed or covered. That way, students in neither school have an unfair advantage.
2. From an instructional perspective, the charts could be construed as a formal learning strategy and, from that perspective, could function as a prompt and therefore be inappropriate. See the *Guidelines* (the 4th Do).
3. The *Guidelines* apply to the Iowa Tests and the CRT.

Question

Recently, I was at a math in-service where it was announced that students can use manipulatives for the math portion of the CRT. Did I misunderstand? Could you clarify?

Answer

Yes, you did misunderstand. Thank you for checking. Manipulatives are not allowed on the CRT (or on the NRT). They could provide an unfair advantage, and their use was not factored into the test development; in fact, they could be more of a hindrance than a help. Other aids, however, are allowed on the math portion of the CRT. The CRT has a calculator use portion for which calculators are intended and recommended. In addition, for the CRT, math reference sheets appropriate for grade level and test items are provided by Measured Progress for each student. Grades 3-5 math reference sheets contain punch-out rulers and formulas; grades 6-8 & 10 math reference sheets provide a list of formulas to which students may refer when answering questions.

NOTE: Math manipulatives are objects used by students to represent math concepts and operations.

Question

Can students write in the CRT test booklets?

Answer

Yes, students may write in the CRT test booklets. They may highlight, underline, and write in the margins. However, please remind students to record their answers in the student response booklet (SRB) not in the test booklet. Only grade 3 students record answers in the test booklet.

Students should not write in the NRT (Iowa Tests) test booklets.

NOTE: The above questions and answers may not apply to accommodations which are determined on an individual basis.



In the Spotlight

East Helena System Test Coordinator Kevin Van Nice and School Test Coordinator Jannice Odermann open boxes and inventory testing materials for MontCAS Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Working together, they prepare materials and provide training for test administrators. They also have prepared a task list and test preparation tips for students. Samples of both are online

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/assessment/Phase2.html#EH>.

Thank you Kevin and Jannice for sharing.





Boxes for Returning Materials

Both Riverside Publishing Company and Measured Progress provide boxes and instructions for shipping materials. **Please use the boxes provided by the testing contractors.** Smaller or larger boxes could result in losses on conveyer belts.

Thank you.

MontCAS Phase 1

NRT (The Iowa Tests)

Spring 2006 Schedule of Important Dates--

February 23-28, 2006	Riverside Publishing delivers new answer documents and Grade 4 Practice Tests to systems.
March 1-10, 2006	Systems inventory and distribute testing materials. Use the <i>FAX ME!</i> form found in the pretest package to order additional materials.
March 6-10, 2006	Systems provide local training sessions for Test Administrators.
March 21-22, 2006	Systems administer Grade 4 Practice Tests. (Optional)
March 22-April 12, 2006	Testing window
April 14, 2006	Last day for systems to return completed answer documents to the Riverside Scoring Service.
April 4-May 12, 2006	Tests scored at the Riverside Scoring Service. Stage 1 reports will be scored on a first-in-first-out basis and mailed approximately 15 business days from the date the answer documents are received by Riverside in a scorable condition.
May 10-16, 2006	<p>Systems review their Stage 1 score reports. Each system must review its score reports for The Iowa Tests within ten business days of receipt for discrepancies that affect system summary results. All discrepancies will be reported to Judy Snow at the Montana Office of Public Instruction for evaluation and approval. Additional information can be found in the System Test Coordinator's pretest package.</p> <p>Stage 2 reports will be completed after all the systems in the state have been scored. These reports will ship within approximately 30 business days of the last system received.</p>

Iowa Test Materials Shipped by FedEx

Riverside Publishing Company contracts with FedEx for shipping the Iowa Test materials. In the fall of 2005, systems that do not have regular FedEx delivery or pickup in their area were asked to contact Riverside Publishing.

If you do not have regular FedEx delivery or pickup in your area and did not contact Riverside in the fall, please contact Brenda Granstrom at Riverside Publishing Company.

brenda_granstrom@hmco.com or (800) 767-8420 x6103.

FedEx will arrange for delivery and pickup in those areas. It is important that systems notify Brenda Granstrom at Riverside so she can make those arrangements with Fed Ex.

Answer Documents to Riverside

If your system anticipates testing early in the Iowa Tests window and sending Iowa Test answer documents to Riverside Publishing Company for scoring before April 10, please contact Brittanny Black at OPI.

bblack@mt.gov or 406-444-4431.



The Future of MontCAS, Phase 1—The NRT (Iowa Tests)

At its January 2006 meeting, the Board of Public Education began the process for a rule change that affects the statewide administration of the Iowa Tests. The board voted for a notice of hearing on a proposed amendment to the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM 10.55.603 and 10.56.101) concerning assessment for students in grades 4, 8, and 11 in Language Arts, Reading, Math, Social Studies and Science.

The proposed amendment would be effective **after** the spring 2006 statewide administration of the Iowa Tests to all students in grades 4, 8, and 11. Following are the options under consideration:

- Testing all students in grades 4, 8, and 11 in the fall of 2006 OR
- Testing a representative sample of students in grades 4, 8, and 11 in the fall of 2006 unless research determines that a sample is not feasible. Schools selected for the sample would be required to participate.

On February 27, 2006 at 9:00 am, a public hearing was held to consider the amendment of the above-stated rules relating to assessment. Discussion will follow at the March Board of Public Education meeting. That meeting is March 9 and 10 at the Higher Education Complex in Helena.

<http://www.bpe.state.mt.us/meetings.shtml>

Tentative Contact Date for schools selected for the sample: August 2006

Tentative Testing Window: Two weeks within October 9 – November 9, 2006

MontCAS Phase 2

Spring 2006 Schedule of Important Dates

CRT-Alternate dates and information are shaded in blue.

CRT and CRT-Alternate

February 13 – March 29, 2006	CRT-Alternate testing window.
March 6 – March 29, 2006	CRT testing window.
March 27, 2006	End of window for System Test Coordinators to arrange UPS pickup to return used CRT student response booklets (SRBs) and CRT-Alternate student test materials in envelopes labeled “For return of CRT-Alternate student materials” to Measured Progress.
April 3, 2006	If a UPS pickup was not arranged by System Test Coordinators on or before March 27 th , a statewide UPS pickup of used CRT student response booklets (SRBs) and CRT-Alternate student test materials in envelopes labeled “For return of CRT-Alternate student materials” will occur

	on April 3.
April 7, 2006	If a UPS pickup was not arranged by System Test Coordinators on or before March 27 th , a statewide UPS statewide pickup of all other test materials will occur on April 7.
April 24 – May 18, 2006	Window for online verification of student demographic data after testing for the CRT and CRT-Alternate
June and July 2006	CRT and CRT-Alternate standard setting meetings (grades 3-8 & 10)

Students Not Registered in the Measured Progress Data Entry Window

The data entry window for registering students for the CRT and the CRT-Alternate closed in February. The registration is used to generate bar code labels for students. New students and others not registered during that window will not have bar code labels; therefore, demographic data for those students needs to be hand entered (bubbled) directly on the student response booklets (SRB).

Detailed instructions for that data entry are included in the *Test Coordinators Manual* and the *Test Administrators Manual(s)*.

- **Test Coordinators Manual**

- The last two pages contain a sample of the student response booklet (SRB)
 - The data on page two of the student response booklet is confidential and should be entered after the student has completed the test.
- Pages 23 – 26 contain coding directions. Please pay particular attention to the directions for Free/Reduced price lunch (F/RL).
- Note: Page 20 in the *Test Coordinators Manual* contains a coding checklist. The mailed version of that checklist is incorrect. Page 20 in the online version of the Manual is correct:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/CRT/06CRTTestCoordManual.pdf>

In addition, a replacement page is online—click here.

- **Test Administrators Manual(s)**

- Pages 32-34 contain coding directions. Please pay particular attention to the directions for Free/Reduced price lunch (F/RL).
- Page 9 contains a correct coding checklist.



Please remember: For students with bar code labels, the only bubbling that should occur on pages 1 and 2 of the student response booklet (SRB) is the test form on page 1, vocational concentrator information for grade 10 on page 1, and accommodation information (if applicable) in boxes L and M on page 2. Any other bubbling on pages 1 and 2 for a student with a bar code label will not be read by the scanners. System Test Coordinators may edit student demographic data during the online data verification window (April 24 – May 18).

CRT-Alternate Materials Kits

The kits containing support materials for the CRT-Alternate were shipped to test coordinators to distribute to teachers administering the CRT-Alternate. These kits, one for each grade (3-8 and 10), are in black plastic accordion files. Some of the materials can be reused; the others will need to be replaced.

Please advise teachers to complete the pink reorder form that is in the first section of each file. The pink reorder form is to be returned to Measured Progress with the student response booklets (SRBs) and other materials in the white plastic envelopes supplied by Measured Progress.

Please DO NOT send the accordion files to Measured Progress or OPI after testing.

Instead, System Test Coordinators should collect the accordion file materials kits and store them in a secure location for use in Spring 2007. Measured Progress will replace materials that are indicated on the pink reorder form.



CRT and CRT-Alternate Standard Setting—2006



Standard setting, the process of determining cut points for performance levels for the CRT and the CRT-Alternate, will be conducted in June and July of 2006.

Panels of Montanans, including classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, school administrators, parents, and school board members, will participate in this process. Measured Progress will facilitate. Below are details:

- Information letter from Measured Progress and a copy of the online form are on the OPI website
- <http://www.opi.mt.gov/assessment/Phase2.html#TD>
- All applications to participate must be completed on the Measured Progress website <http://iservices.measuredprogress.org>
- Applications must be completed online by April 14, 2006
- Applicants will be notified by May 4, 2006
- All meetings will be at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel in Helena.
- Participants will be reimbursed for travel, meals (those not provided during the sessions), and lodging expenses.
- Participants will receive renewal units and honoraria
- Dates
 - June 21-22
 - CRT, Reading and Math, grades 4, 8, and 10
 - June 20-22
 - CRT-Alternate, Reading and Math, grades 3-8 and 10
 - July 26-27
 - CRT, Reading and Math, grades, 3, 5, 6, and 7



Principals' Certification of Proper Test Administration

The principal of each school **is required** to certify that the administration of the CRT and CRT-Alternate has been completed according to the requirements in the *Test Coordinators Manual* and the *OPI Guidelines and Procedures for Test Security*. The Principals' Certification of Proper Test Administration form will be used for this purpose.

A memo containing a unique school password for the online certification was included in your pretest materials. In addition, detailed instructions (a guide with screen shots) for completing the online form may be found online at <http://iservices.measuredprogress.org> (select *Montana* then click *Principal Certification* to access the form) beginning March 6. A password is not required to download the instruction guide.

System test coordinators need to work with building principals to complete a form online for each grade tested. Principals will use their passwords to complete and submit the form online. Once each form is completed, the principal needs to print two copies. One copy must be signed and returned to Measured Progress with the student response booklets for that grade (shipping deadline April 3). Place the copy for Measured Progress on top of the materials summary form before closing the box for each grade. The second copy should be retained by the principal.



Nonstandard Accommodations on the CRT

Guidelines for the use of nonstandard accommodations have changed since the printing of the CRT test coordinator and administrator manuals. The new guidelines are:

If a student uses an accommodation that results in an invalid score (aka, a nonstandard accommodation), the student is considered to be a non-participant when calculating the participation rate for AYP purposes. In addition to counting that student as a non-participant, the score from the assessment is not included in calculating the proficiency rate for AYP determinations.

- Nonstandard accommodations can only be provided for a student with disabilities if the accommodation(s) is specified in the student's IEP.
- If the student is administered the test with a nonstandard accommodation in the content area test (reading or math), the student will not be counted as a participant for AYP determinations in that content area. The non-standard accommodation used must be coded in box L (reading) or box M (math) on page two of the student response booklet (SRB). The student's results for that content area test (reading or math) will not be calculated in the averages for AYP determination.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that all students participate in the statewide assessment. This requirement applies whether or not the student takes the test with a nonstandard accommodation.
- Please ignore the reference to the 1% rule that is on page 33 of the *Test Coordinator's Manual*. It does not apply to these guidelines for nonstandard accommodations.

Inclusion of Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) in the CRT

The United States Department of Education guidelines for participation of LEP students on the CRT make the procedures and processes for the CRT substantially different from those for the Iowa Tests. The table that follows is an explanation of the procedures for LEP students for the CRT.

NOTE: Foreign exchange students are not included in this guidance. Please follow the specific guidance for foreign exchange students in the *Test Coordinators Manual*.

	<u>Continuing LEP Students</u> Not First Year in a United States School	<u>First Year LEP Students</u> First Year in a United States School
Definition/Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A student who has been enrolled in a United States School for more than one year and meets one of the following three criteria AND the statement following the criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English Comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant American Indian or Alaskan Native and who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English proficiency AND also has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny such an individual the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to participate fully in our society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A student who is enrolled for the first time in a United States school in the 2005/2006 school year and meets one of the following three criteria AND the statement following the criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English Comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant American Indian or Alaskan Native and who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English proficiency AND also has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny such an individual the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to participate fully in our society.
Testing Requirement for 2004 CRT	Regular CRT in Math and Reading with or without accommodations as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Math CRT with or without accommodations as needed Regular Reading CRT with or without accommodations as needed OR an approved English language proficiency assessment
AYP	Counted in participation rate and scores are averaged for the academic indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counted in the participation rate Not counted in the academic indicator
Coding in Student Response Booklet (SRB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Box I, Page 2, code LEP/ELL Boxes L and M, Page 2, code accommodations used if applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Box I, Page 2, code LEP/ELL Box J, Page 2, code 1st year in U.S. LEP student Boxes L and M, Page 2, code accommodations used if applicable
Special Instructions	Follow basic instructions in the <i>CRT Test Coordinator's Manual</i>	If student takes an approved English language proficiency assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send copy of the answer document to Judy Snow, OPI, Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501.

Enrollment Count

Spring 2006 Testing Window

The window for reporting the disaggregated enrollment data to the Office of Public Instruction opens on March 6. The count date is the last day of **your school's** CRT testing window (March 6-29). The enrollment data is due to your County Superintendent on April 13 and to the OPI on April 20.

The disaggregated enrollment data that you report to OPI should be drawn from the same source as the demographic information (on bar code labels or bubbled on student response booklets for new students) submitted to Measured Progress for the CRT and CRT-Alternate. It is recommended that the same person who compiled and reported the data to Measured Progress also complete the testing window enrollment report to OPI. This may be a role more appropriate for a data person rather than the Test Coordinator.

Citrix log in and passwords are needed to gain access to the submission site for this OPI data collection.

<https://enthln001.state.mt.us/Citrix/MetaFrame/default/login.aspx?ClientDetection=On>

Don't forget that your password changes every other month. Everyone's password should end with the letters MA (March/April).

CRT Help Line



Hello!
Nancy Hall
speaking

The Measured Progress Help Line is open for questions on testing materials.

Number to call: 1-888-792-2741

Hours: Business days, 8am – 4pm, Mountain Standard Time

CRT Teacher Validation Study Cancelled

During the week of February 20, the assessment office at OPI sent an email to all test coordinators stating that the CRT teacher validation study will not be conducted. This notice is to further confirm that the validation study referenced in the training CD and in the manuals,


WILL NOT be conducted during the spring 2006 testing.


Please inform ALL building test coordinators.



CRT and CRT-Alternate Testing Windows for Spring 2007

The tentative windows are:

 CRT: March 6 – March 29, 2007

 CRT-Alternate: Feb. 13 – March 29, 2007

Contact Information

Office of Public Instruction

Judy Snow, State Assessment Director

406-444-3656 jsnow@mt.gov

Brittanny Black, Administrative Assistant

406-444-4431 bblack@mt.gov